

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

- 1-3. (Canceled).
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 25 to 150 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.
5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 125 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.
6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 100 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, wherein said uptake promoter is a neutral amino acid.
9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein said promoter is L-alanine.

10. (Currently Amended) An MRI contrast medium composition for oral administration for examination of the liver comprising as an active ingredient a ~~physiologically acceptable manganese (II) compound~~ MnCl₂ and an uptake promoter comprising ~~one or more amino acids~~ alanine, wherein Mn and the promoter are used in a molar ratio higher than that at which coordination compounds between Mn and promoter are formed to a substantial degree, wherein the molar ratio of Mn to promoter is in the range of from 2:1 to 3:1.

11-12. (Canceled).

13. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 10, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 25 to 150 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.

14. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 13, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 125 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.

15. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 14, wherein the dosage of manganese is in the range of from 50 to 100 $\mu\text{mol/kg}$ body weight.

16-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) The composition according to ~~claim 17~~ claim 10, wherein said promoter is L-alanine.

19. (Previously Presented) An MRI contrast medium kit comprising a first container accomodating ~~a physiologically acceptable manganese (II) compound~~ MnCl₂, and a second container accomodating an uptake promoter comprising ~~one or more amino acids~~ alanine, and optionally, instructions for the use of the kit, the molar ratio of Mn to promoter being within the range of from 2:1 to 3:1.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Previously Presented) A method for MRI of a mammalian liver comprising orally administering an effective amount of said MRI contrast medium composition according to claim 10.

22. (Cancelled)